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ABSTRACT

This bulletin provides news on the follow-up to the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990) at which 155 countries pledged to provide education for all children and adults and massively reduce illiteracy before the year 2000. This bulletin focuses on the September 1994 Cairo (Egypt) Population Conference and the issues of population and development which dominated it. Articles include: (1) "Population and Development: A New Approach" (Nafis Sadik); (2) "The Cairo Population Conference: A Women's Agenda"; (3) "Population Education Comes of Age"; (4) "Special Needs Education: Conference Endorses Inclusive Schools"; (5) "Arab Ministers Emphasize Cooperation"; and (6) "Mubarak Signs Delhi Declaration". Other sections includes news briefs, book notes, and a calendar of meetings. (EH)

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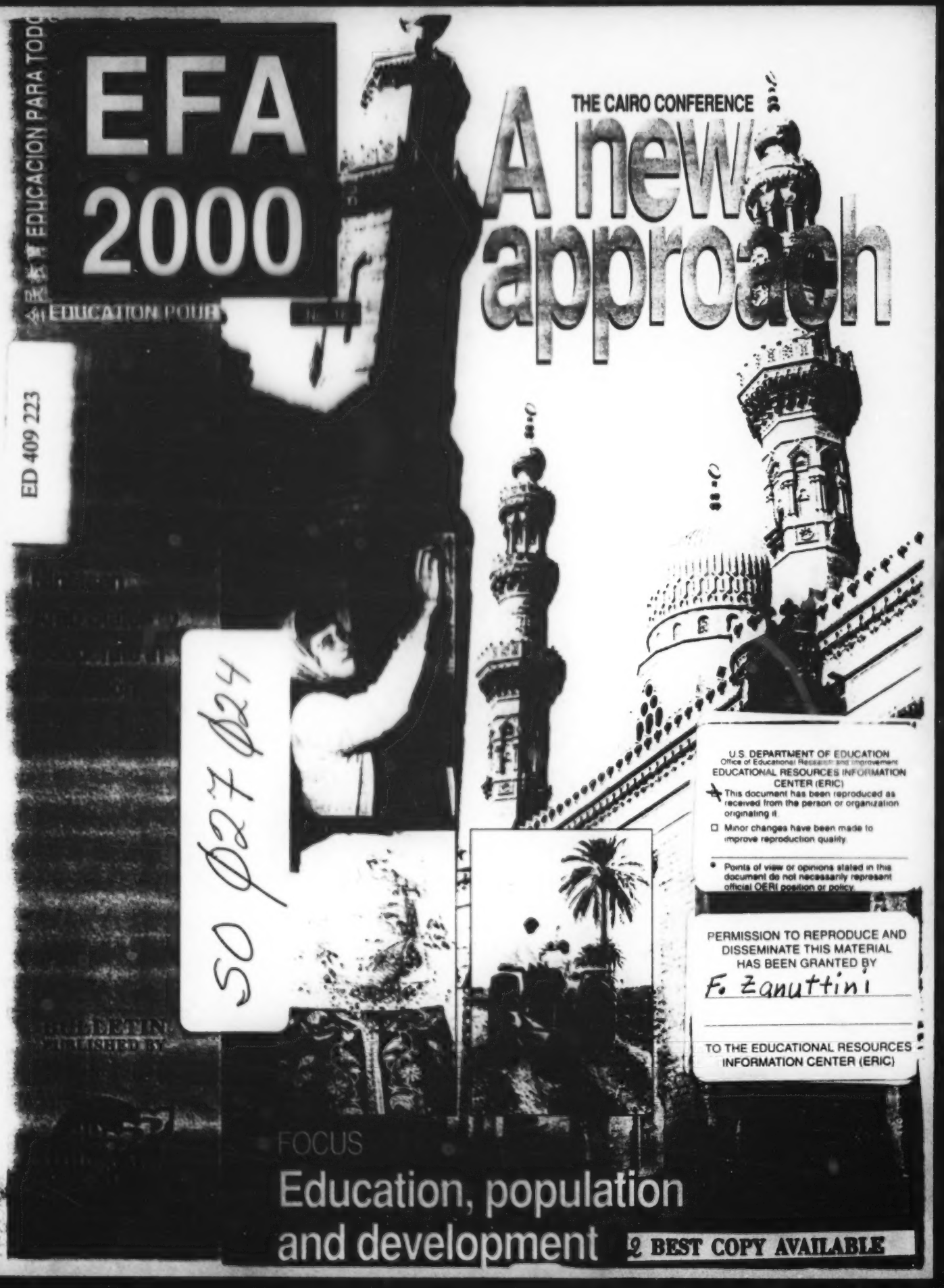
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POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT:

A new approach

OPINION

A historic conference this September not only has the potential to save the lives of up to 500,000 women each year, starting now, but in the longer term, to immeasurably improve the lives of millions. It will make a critical contribution to sustained economic growth and development.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), to be held in Cairo from 5–13 September 1994, will stress two themes: a holistic approach to gender issues, particularly reproductive health care, and the overall need to bring populations into balance with available resources for development. We hope the outcome of the Conference will be to encourage countries to place individual needs, especially those of women, at the head of the development agenda, and to incorporate population considerations into all development efforts.

Surveys show that at least 120 million additional women would use a modern family planning method if information and services were more widely available. Giving these women the choice to space their pregnancies or limit the size of their families will save many of the 500,000 lives lost each year as the result of pregnancy. It will encourage smaller, healthier families, facilitate efforts to alleviate poverty and help ease pressure on the environment. There is growing international recognition that these problems are inseparable, and that the quality of life of current and future generations hinges on how well the development process responds to all of them.

The Conference signals a new international approach to population and development issues. For the first time in the international discussion of population and development, the health and well-being of the individual and the family is clearly seen to be pre-eminent. The new approach is to be seen in the Conference process itself, during which non-governmental organizations, especially women's organizations, have taken a prominent part. More than 1,500 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are accredited to the Conference and many national delegations include NGO representatives.

The draft Programme of Action for the Conference calls for specific measures to promote gender equality. These include equal access to education and employment for both sexes and universal access to family planning information and services as part of a broader reproductive health package. The package includes prenatal and post-natal care, safe delivery, prevention and treatment of infertility and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, and related information and counselling.

In regard to education, the draft Programme of Action emphasizes the need for universal primary schooling and literacy, job training, elimination of gender disparities, and greater awareness of population, development and health issues, leading to necessary actions and responsible behaviour.

The Cairo process has taken three years of consultations and discussions. Governments have met at regional and sub-regional levels; expert group meetings and round-table discussions have hammered out many of the complex technical questions; and throughout the process, NGOs have added the essential dimension of popular participation. The result is a document that speaks directly to the needs of women and men throughout the world, and in doing so addresses the future of the planet itself. It represents no particular culture or system of belief, but contains principles and practices acceptable to all.

It is hard to overestimate the importance of this conference. ICPD is expected to adopt a set of forward-looking, achievable, twenty-year goals aimed at reducing mortality, making family planning information and services universally available, and enabling all children to complete at least primary education. The proposed goals build upon goals for the year 2000 agreed to at previous international forums, including the World Conference on Education for All and the World Summit for Children, both held in 1990.

Dr. Nafis Sadik

Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Secretary-General of the International Conference on Population and Development.

The Cairo Population Conference:

A WOMEN'S AGENDA

When delegates from 170 countries gather this September in Cairo for the United Nations Conference on Population and Development, they will debate a plan of action to improve the quality of life of the world's present and future generations.

The role and status of women and related issues must remain the focal point of all discussion in matters relating to population," said Dr Nafis-Sadik, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Secretary-General of the conference.

Unlike the two previous United Nations conferences on population (Bucharest, 1974 and Mexico City, 1984), the Cairo agenda has been strongly influenced by input from non–governmental organizations (NGOs) and women's groups, leading to an overall emphasis on gender equity, human rights and an expanded, more holistic vision of population policies. "We feel that it is an excellent document that promotes human rights, rejects coercion and gives a different emphasis to people, especially women, who are at the centre of the population debate," said Sunetra Puri, director of public affairs for the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

At current rates, today's world population of 5.6 billion would double in less than 50 years, with 90 per cent of this increase concentrated in developing countries. Growth rates vary widely: in east Asia and the Caribbean, they are 1.3 per cent; compared with 1.8 per cent for Latin America, 2.2 per cent for south Asia and over 3 per cent in most parts of Africa.

The United Nations has sketched several demographic scenarios for the next 20 years: at a low growth rate, world population would rise to 7.27 billion by 2015, a high rate boosts this figure to 7.92 billion. The difference of 660 million people in the short span of twenty years is nearly equivalent to the current population of the African continent. Which figure the world steers towards depends largely on how it invests in three fields: education, especially for girls; infant, child and maternal mortality reduction; and the provision of universal access to family planning and reproductive health services.

The draft Programme of Action suggests goals to be attained by the year 2015: reduction of infant mortality rates to under 75 per 1,000 live births; significant reductions in maternal mortality (to under 75 per 100,000 women); to make reproductive health and family planning information and services universally available, including prenatal and normal delivery care; and, significantly, to enable all school-age children, boys and girls, to complete their primary education and when this is attained, to facilitate access to and completion of education at secondary and higher school levels.

Strong consensus on education

The Conference document recognizes that education plays a key role in reaching these objectives, whether via the formal or non-formal system, through mass media campaigns or improved health counselling. "The fundamental problem that has to be addressed if escalating population growth is to be mastered is that of improving access to basic education, of providing learning opportunities to the 100 million or so out-of-school children and to the one billion illiterate adults, three quarters of them women," said UNESCO's Director–General, Federico Mayor, at the opening of International Congress on Population Education and Development held last year in Turkey.

Since the Education for All (EFA) movement was launched in Jomtien four years ago, international conferences have underlined the pivotal role of education in development. Investing in people, namely in education and health, is recognized as the key to improved living standards and sustainable development. The Earth Summit's Agenda 21 includes meeting individual human needs as one of its top priorities. Gathered in New Delhi last December, the nine high-population countries (E-9 summit) reaffirmed their commitment to achieve universal primary education for all by 2000, with special efforts to reach girls. By putting people, especially women, at the centre of development, the Cairo Conference fits into this trend, which will be further reinforced by the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, both to be held next year.

Priority to girls and women

Giving girls and women access to education puts them in a position to make informed choices and gain some control over themselves and their future. There is a wealth of empirical evidence showing the positive impact of girls' and women's education on delaying the age of marriage, reducing fertility and child mortality and improving economic productivity.

Since educated mothers are more likely to send their daughters to school, the benefits of educating women are cumulative. In Brazil, for example, illiterate women have 6.5 children on average, a figure that drops to 2.5 for women with a secondary education. Even modest levels of education result in very significant declines in child mortality. Evidence indicates that each additional year of a mother's schooling translates into a 5 to 10 per cent decline in child mortality. A study by the United Nations Population Division shows that as the overall educational level of the community rises, the impact of individual schooling upon fertility grows stronger.

However, these positive correlations need to be qualified: in the least developed countries, small improvements in formal schooling of girls may initially increase fertility, because of improved nutrition and health practices. Some studies point to a threshold level of seven to eight years of schooling beyond which differentials in fertility become visible.

Cultural values

Because the notion of population touches so closely on cultural values, like the preference in many countries for sons over daughters, it remains a highly delicate subject.

The meetings leading up the Cairo conference brought out some quite divergent views on policy objectives and even on acceptable terminology. But according to Joan Dunlop,

President of the International Coalition for the Health of Women, a non-profit group, these disagreements have received unbalanced attention: "What is fascinating about this document is that it is progressive, understood and agreed upon by a large spectrum of countries. Women feel very strongly that the issues have to do with health, empowerment and rights. What is controversial is putting the budgetary force behind population policies. This is about more than family planning." The Cairo document calls for global annual expenditures of $13.5 billion by 2000, rising to $22.2 billion by 2015.

A broader perspective

Since the first World Population Conference in Bucharest in 1974, the notion of population has broadened while issues have gained in complexity. Delegates in Cairo will not only discuss strategies to slow population growth in developing countries but also measures to ensure a more equitable sharing of resources between North and South. More than in the two previous conferences on population, women's organizations have played a key role in shaping the conference document. Moving away from a narrow conception of family planning, the document emphasizes a comprehensive approach to population that includes prenatal care, educating girls, expanding health services and promoting women's equality.

Besides calling for steps to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005, Chapter XI of the Cairo document stresses the need to include population issues in curricula at all levels of formal and non-formal education. "It is not enough to talk about the regulation of fertility," says R.C. Sharma, a UNESCO programme specialist. "When you talk about human rights, gender equity, reproductive rights and health, HIV/AIDS, sex education, responsible parenthood, ageing, they are issues that do not automatically fit in with education in general. They are specific problems, sometimes controversial, that have to be addressed through qualitative change and improvements in content. You are dealing with attitudes and values that are deeply embedded in the socio-cultural milieu of societies."

Since the launch of the EFA movement, efforts to redesign curricula are underway in a large number of countries. In more than 100, UNFPA has made population education a major component of its assistance (see page 5). One of its most important aspects is to convey positive values and attitudes to boys on gender equity. "If the new generations can be brought up to discuss openly their rights and responsibilities, we might finally see the elimination of discriminatory practices," said Dr Sadik at the E-9 summit in New Delhi.

Government commitment

Every region of the world has its success stories. Education has been central to slowing down population growth in Thailand. In a country where 90 per cent of women are now literate, the average number of children per woman fell from 6.1 in 1965-70 to 2.2 in 1987 and was matched by a sharp drop in infant mortality and substantial economic progress. Through a commitment to women's education, the Indian state of Kerala has achieved total literacy and contained population growth. Kerala has one of the world's lowest infant mortality rates and the lowest fertility rate in India. Changing the status of women within a country's legal framework can also be influential: M.L. Samman, a UNESCO programme specialist, cites the case of Tunisia, where a legislative reform in 1960 overhauled the family code, officially banning polygamy, giving women the right to ask for divorce and legalizing the use of contraceptives. At the same time, schools opened up to population education. Tunisia's fertility rate dropped from 6.97 in 1960 to 3.4 in 1991.

"To what extent governments feel implicated has a large role to play in the success of strategies," says Jacques Véron, a demographer belonging to the French Centre for Population and Development. "Countries have made progress because of government commitment and working hand in hand with NGOs," agrees Sunetra Puri of the IPPF. "The political will is very important."

Since Jomtien, most high-population countries have significantly enlarged their education budgets. But like the challenge to achieve EFA, integrating population with development calls on partnerships at all levels. While the Cairo document underlines the key role played by non-governmental organizations, education specialists emphasize that the top must play its role and give the grassroots a chance to act. This implies setting priorities and reallocating resources at a time when debt servicing and structural adjustment policies have cut into the health and education budgets of many countries. Even before the Cairo conference, several donors have taken steps to increase their funding for population activities: Japan and the United States have pledged $1 billion over the next seven years. ■

EVOLUTION OF SOME KEY INDICATORS

Region		Africa	Latin America	North America	Asia	Europe	More developed regions	Less developed regions
Estimated female enrolment ratios of 6-23 age group (1)	1975	25.6	52.9	62.5	38.7	62.7	66.8	37.6
	1990	34.8	63.3	70.0	42.4	67.9	72.0	42.8
Infant mortality (per thousand live births) (2)	1975-80	126	70	14	91	19	19	97
	1985-90	103	54	10	72	13	15	78
Number of births per women (2)	1975-80	6.5	4.4	1.9	4.1	1.9	2.0	4.5
	1985-90	6.2	3.4	1.8	3.5	1.7	1.9	3.9
Percentage of couples using contraceptive methods (3)	1987 (average date)	17	57	-	53	-	71	48

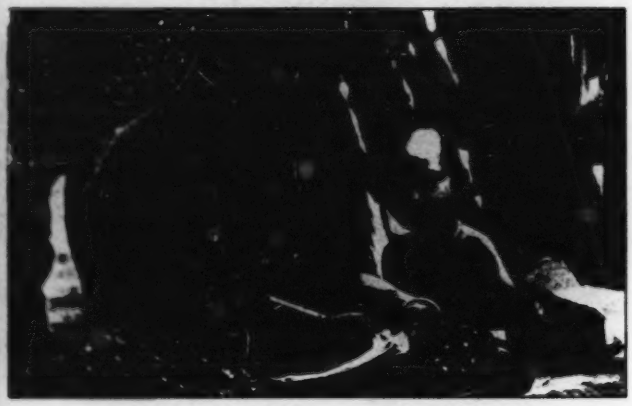
Sources: (1) UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1991
(2) United Nations, "World Population Prospects", 1990
(3) Referring to couples with wives in reproductive ages. From the United Nations Secretariat paper on "Population and Women: A Review of Issues and Trends", 1992

Population education comes of age

In Zambia, Grade 1 students draw their family tree, explore their environment, learn about personal cleanliness and common diseases, and discuss their responsibilities at home and school. During their first six years of study, children are exposed to a gamut of current issues, ranging from population growth and gender discrimination to HIV/AIDS and environmental degradation. At the same time, they participate in community development programmes and outline possible solutions to problems facing their society.

Currently in its testing phase, this revised curriculum aims to make education more relevant to the lives and surroundings of students. Like some 100 countries around the world that have recognized the critical links between population, environment and development, the programme introduces population issues into the mainstream curriculum.

"In the past, primary school age children were sometimes considered too young for exposure to population concepts, but it is now widely recognized that attitudes and beliefs are formed early in life and can be influenced by education starting at a young age," says O.J. Sikes, chief of the Education, Communication and Youth Branch at the UNFPA. Viet Nam has



taken a lead by exposing kindergarden children to concepts such as family size through drawing, storytelling, games and dances, while their parents attend classes on health and other matters related to childcare, human sexuality and reproduction.

At the First International Congress on Population Education organized by UNESCO and UNFPA last year in Istanbul, ninety-three countries adopted an action framework detailing strategies and measures to ensure that education systems pay greater attention to population issues. According to UNFPA's Executive Director, Dr Nafis Sadik, the Congress marked the "coming of age of population education," which has become "one of the most popular education innovations of our time".

Population education aims to convince learners that they can control many of the events in their lives, including those related to reproductive behaviour. "It is very important that young children learn that they can have a degree of control over some aspects of their lives, and that childbearing is one of them," says Sikes. By exploring concerns closely related to pupils' surroundings, such as family size, sexuality, health and nutrition, human rights and responsibility as well as ecology, population education also helps boys and girls to develop more positive attitudes and values vis-à-vis gender.

Integrating population education into the mainstream curriculum is often a difficult and slow process. "The very complexity and nature of the questions studied make their integration into school programmes all the more difficult," says Josyanne Blanchard, a UNESCO programme specialist. New concepts are introduced into subjects such as biology (sexuality), history (patterns of human settlement), geography (the environment) and civic education (human rights), requiring textbook revisions and teacher training.

Modernizing the curriculum goes hand-in-hand with introducing different teaching and learning methods that stimulate students' expression and creativity, and promote critical reflection, decision-making and problem-solving. To put these participatory methods into action, teachers need to receive adequate training and teaching materials. In Niger and Togo for example, teachers follow distance training on population education for five to six months before attending a week-long in-service training session. It is estimated that approximately 6,000 teachers in French and Portuguese-speaking countries have already benefited from in-service training.

Experience shows that the introduction of population education requires action by high-level policy makers and planners. Over the past twenty years, UNFPA and UNESCO have invested in building up regional and national expertise. Asia was the first region to accept the idea of an intervention in population matters as a deliberate part of policy. Today, most of the area's national population education projects are primarily staffed by personnel trained in all aspects of population education work, while regional workshops have concentrated on developing appropriate curricular materials.

In Latin America and the Caribbean region, current concerns are to expand coverage, modernize population education content and design evaluation techniques. The majority of African countries have developed strategies to introduce population education into the formal system. To further improve coordination in the area of population, environment and preventive education, UNESCO has earmarked funds for an interdisciplinary and inter-agency project called "Environment and Population Education and Information for Human Development".

Theatre, competitions, posters and the mass media are often used to mobilize communities around population issues. In Peru, a major daily newspaper carried a weekly insert on population issues, which helped to build a broad base of support for broaching the subject in school. There is also a constant need to update and renew population education programmes in light of evidence from scientific and social research and emerging social problems, like adolescent fertility and AIDS for example.

Because population education deals with sensitive issues, some countries have organized national campaigns to involve a broad cross section of participants in the reform. In Madagascar, where children are considered gifts from God and an honour to one's ancestors, a dialogue with parents, teachers and community leaders focused on how to best insure the child's well-being and hence, that of future generations. By analysing today's economic context, parents gradually recognized that children from smaller families stood a better chance of being well cared for and educated. Their involvement with teachers and government authorities in shaping the educational reform played an important part in its acceptance. "Population education has the potential to help alleviate school attrition by improving the quality of education, especially when parents are involved in the programme and children and teachers are visibly motivated," says Sikes. ■

BRIEFS

EDUCATING CITIES

How cities can improve education and promote a broader understanding between people of different cultures will be highlighted at the Third Congress of Educating Cities, taking place in Bologna, Italy, from 10–12 November 1994. The meeting will focus on multi-culturalism and discuss themes ranging from exclusion and marginality in cities to ways of encouraging creativity and integration. UNESCO's international programme on street children will be among the educational concerns presented in ten workshops. Initiated by Barcelona in 1990, the concept of "Educating Cities" has grown into a worldwide network of 100 urban centres that exchange experiences on how to promote a positive learning environment for children and young people.

THE SOUND OF SUCCESS

A choir of former Ecuadorian street children showed off their talents at UNESCO in June with a programme of traditional Latin American songs

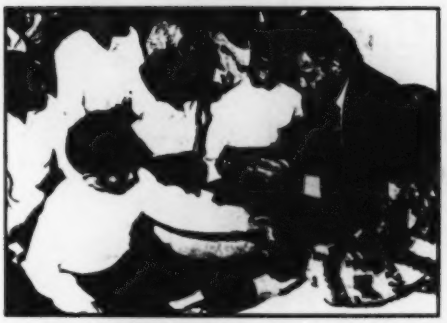


Photo Ines Forbes

Colin M. Power, Assistant Director General and Alphonse Tay of UNESCO (Right) greet the 'Coro Polifonico Infantil'

and Beethoven's Ode to Joy. Thanks to *Obra de Promocion para la Educacion en el Mundo* (OPAM), an Ecuadorian NGO, they are now off the streets, following an education and performing regularly. For more information on UNESCO's education programme for street children, please contact Alphonse Tay, (address in box p. 8).

STAGING ISSUES

Village-based theatre, an ancient cultural tradition in Papua New Guinea, has turned into a powerful medium for getting educational and health messages across in a nation that counts more than 860 different languages, and where 65 per cent of youths have had no or little schooling. Several years ago, unemployed youths started to perform plays aimed at raising awareness on health, family planning, the environment and human rights. Their efforts led to the birth of the Awareness Community Theatre Network (ACT), under the umbrella of the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific. The programme, presently comprising twenty-one local theatre groups in seventeen provinces, has worked with the Department of Health on several projects, including one on HIV/AIDS that reached more than 84,000 people in rural areas. In performances, actors use a wooden phallic symbol to demonstrate the use of condoms, since censorship forbids any pictorial instructions from being included in condom packets. In workshops, ACT trains community drama groups to raise awareness through stage performances.

SOUTHERN ASIA: SHARING EFA EXPERIENCES

Representatives from six countries of southern Asia met in Bangladesh to exchange experiences on innovative approaches in the field of basic education for girls and women, during a workshop convened by UNESCO's "EFA-Making it Work" project from 28 May to 2 June. Participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Thailand stressed the importance of training the local community to identify problems in the field of basic education, propose solutions and participate in the implementation of projects. Programmes work best when a climate of confidence prevails among various partners and a clear distribution of responsibilities at various levels is spelt out. Lack of information at lower government levels about national plans and strategies was identified as an obstacle to effective collaboration. Participants underlined the need for relevant, gender-sensitive curriculums and suggested that teachers, especially women, should be upgraded to play the role of development agents. They also stressed that in-service training could enhance teachers' effectiveness in putting a child-centred approach into action.

AGENCY ACTION FOR AFRICA

On 16 and 17 June, representatives from five United Nations agencies, (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA and the World Bank), as well as the Donors for African Education consortium, met in New York to fashion a concerted strategy to assist African countries in achieving important improvements in EFA. Over the next few months, the agencies will meet with African ministers to see how to put new approaches towards education into place.

LITERACY DAY ON THE AIR...

On International Literacy Day, 8 September 1994, UNESCO, in cooperation with the International Reading Association, Sprint and France Telecom, is organizing a two-hour international teleconference. The multichannel satellite event will feature panels organized in Washington and Paris on the following themes: family literacy and non-formal education; formal education; and education for the future.

...AND A VOLUNTEER LITERACY CORPS

The International Reading Association, an organization of over 350,000 reading and literacy educators, is setting up a voluntary literacy corps to promote literacy in developing countries. Called the Volunteers for International Professional Programs, the corps will provide technical assistance to literacy educators in fields such as teacher training, curriculum development, bilingual instruction and assessment issues. For more information, please contact Richard Long, International Reading Association, Suite 422, 444 N. Capitol St N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

WORLD BANK DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Although developing countries invest $200 billion a year in new infrastructure, one billion people in the developing world still lack access to clean water and nearly 2 billion lack adequate sanitation. In its seventeenth annual *World Development Report*, the World Bank examines the record in infrastructure provision and suggests ways to broaden the focus of policy beyond increasing the quantity of infrastructure facilities to improving the quality and efficiency of services. The *Report* recommends restructuring subsidies so that they reach the poor more effectively and identifies several ways to improve efficiency, maintenance and cost recovery, namely by a free market–style overhaul of public projects, improved competition and giving users a say in the way enterprises are run.

QUALITY PRE-SCHOOLS

Improving pre-school quality in developing countries is the main motivation of the German-based Peter-Hesse Foundation. In Haiti, the initiative runs a Montessori pre-school project: via a teacher-training centre set up in 1986, 206 young Haitian educators have compled a one-year course leading to a Montessori pre-school teacher's diploma. Twenty-two pre-schools for poor children are successfully working with the help of these teachers. The initiative is looking for international partners to work out the best educational concepts and methods for increasing quality and expanding pre-school education in developing countries. For more information Peter-Hesse Foundation, Otto-Hahn-Str 2, Erkrath, Germany.

SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION:

conference endorses inclusive schools

The worldwide trend toward integrating children with special learning needs into regular school systems is at the core of a framework for action adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education, held in Salamanca, Spain from 7 to 10 June 1994. (see EFA 2000, No. 15)

Delegates from eighty-eight countries and twenty-five international organizations endorsed the principle of the inclusive school. "The issue of inclusive schools is equally important to developing and to developed countries," said Victor Ordoñez, director of UNESCO's Basic Education Division. "It is a-universal concern."

Providing quality education to all children and developing an inclusive society

According to the framework, "the merit of such schools is not only that they are capable of providing quality education to all children; their establishment is a crucial step in helping to change discriminatory attitudes, in creating welcoming communities and in developing an inclusive society".

"Special needs education cannot advance in isolation," said Federico Mayor, UNESCO's Director–General. "It must be part of an overall education strategy, and indeed, of new social and economic policies." Reviewing the evolution of ideas and concepts in the disability field over the last twenty-five years, Bengt Lindqvist, a Swedish member of parliament, traced a chain of important events that have established the right of disabled persons to full and equal participation in society.

"The challenge now is to formulate the requirements for a school for all," said Lindqvist. It is estimated that in many developing countries, not more than 1 per cent of children and adults with special needs are receiving adequate provision. "One of the important things to do then will be to 'normalize' responsibility for the education of children with special needs."

Making schools more responsive to these children demands changes in curricula, organization and teaching strategies. Dr Gordon Porter, vice–president of CIL-PEDIM–Canada, addressed several of the critical factors needed to make inclusion possible. In his province, special educators work closely with regular class teachers to develop strategies and activities favouring the inclusion of students with special needs into mainstream classes. Since 1989, staff training has focused on multi-level instruction, enabling a teacher to prepare one main lesson with variations that are responsive to individual student needs.

These changes can have a far-reaching impact and reduce overall dropout rates: "In the process of absorbing children with special needs, you change pedagogy and orientation. The beneficiaries are the majority of children, and the internal efficiency of the whole system improves," said Ordoñez.

Alongside the inclusive school, the conference focused on the urgency of expanding community–based rehabilitation (CBR) programmes. "The goal of CBR is to demystify the rehabilitation process and give responsibility back to the individual, family and community," explained Dr Brian O'Toole, director of a CBR Programme in Guyana. "The real test of CBR has yet to come. Can CBR expand beyond a relatively small-scale, home-based teaching model into a nationwide community care programme?" The Salamanca framework calls on governments to take a lead in promoting the participation of parents and communities in the planning and decision–making process for children and adults with special education needs. ■

ARAB MINISTERS EMPHASIZE COOPERATION

Underscoring their common language and culture, high-level delegates from nineteen Arab States pledged to strengthen regional cooperation with a view to eradicating illiteracy and improving the quality of education in their region.

This was one of the outcomes to emerge from the Fifth Conference of Ministers of Education and those Responsible for Economic Planning in the Arab States (MINEDARAB V), held in Cairo from 11–14 June, 1994. Delegates considered a range of issues connected with the ways in which education can contribute to development. The conference was organized by UNESCO, in cooperation with ALECSO and ISESCO (the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization).

"It is impossible to imagine the development and resurgence of the Arab world without putting an end to the problem of illiteracy in all the Arab countries," says the Cairo Declaration issued by MINEDARAB V. "The challenges of the Twenty–First Century oblige us to make the enhancement of education a strategic goal that is the focus of concerted efforts by the Arab States and regional and international organizations."

Impressive advances have been made during the last two decades in Arab States, where national education plans and strategies are based on frameworks agreed upon in the late 1970s with the assistance of UNESCO. More than twelve countries have introduced educational reforms resulting in the restructuring of the education system with attendance being compulsory for the 6–10 age cohort.

Enrolment at the primary level expanded from 17 million in 1975 to 31 million in 1991. During this same period, the female enrolment ratio increased from 54 per cent to 75 per cent. Still, large disparities persist: at least one girl in four is not enrolled in primary school while five out of eight women are illiterate. The Conference stressed the importance of women's education both as an intrinsic right and in terms of its impact on population growth.

Participants stressed the importance of using the distance learning approach to universalize and enhance basic education for children and adults. "Software for distance education is expensive to produce," said Abdulgader Yousif, the Conference's secretary. "By doing it collectively, you reduce costs, increase quality and realize the ultimate goal of Arab unity through cultural unity." The region is already equipped with a satellite, ARABSAT, which groups several educational and cultural channels.

The importance of building a worldwide culture of peace based on justice, both in school and at home, was also stressed by the conference. ■

Mubarak signs Delhi Declaration

In a symbolic gesture underlining his country's commitment to education, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt signed the Delhi Declaration last June in a ceremony attended by UNESCO's Director–General, Federico Mayor.

The Declaration, in which the world's nine most populous countries reaffirmed their commitment to EFA, was one of the chief outcomes of the E-9 summit held last 13–16 December in New Delhi.

During the summit, Egypt's education minister forcefully stated his country's devotion to education. "We believe that education is the pivot of our national security taken in an overall meaning that covers our economy, our politics, our civilizational role and our domestic stability. In a nutshell, it is our path towards prosperity."

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BOOK NOTES

INNOVATIVE PROJECTS IN INDIA AND MALI

As two publications in the "Making it Work" series show, there is no insurmountable taboo to educating girls. "*Within Reach*" describes the story of PROPEL, a non-formal education programme designed for rural children by the Indian Institute of Education. Flexible timetables, curricula tailored to the local environment, instructors familiar with the community and easy access to classes are highlights of a programme that works in 137 villages. "*Blazing the Trail*" turns to rural Mali, where Save the Children/USA launched the Village School Programme in 1992. Although parents often feel little incentive to send their children to a faraway school that no longer guarantees a respectable white-collar job, Save the Children/USA has succeeded in mobilizing community support for twenty-two schools in rural settings. Schools are built by the villagers, classes are held in Bambara, the local language, and the curriculum covers life skills relevant to learners' surroundings. With its low cost and promising results, the Village School Programme shows one way to provide basic education in impoverished, rural settings. *(Within Reach: The Story of PROPEL, a Non-Formal Education Project for Rural Children in India*, Paris, UNESCO, 1994, 32 pp. ISSN: 1020-0800. *Blazing the Trail: The Village Schools of Save the Children/USA in Mali*., Paris, UNESCO, 1994, 32 pp. ISSN:1020-0800.

THE PROGRESS OF NATIONS

If social development is to move to centre stage, there is a clear need for better social statistics warns the United Nations Children Fund's report ranking nations according to their achievements in child health, nutrition, education, family planning and progress for women. The 1995 World Summit for Social Development is the opportunity to strengthen the capacity to measure these different facets of real human progress. Across a series of cogent commentaries and league tables, the report looks at achievements and disparities in each of the above areas and asserts that in every case, low-cost strategies exist to improve the well-being of infants, children and adults, including immunization, iodizing all salt supplies and expanding oral rehydration therapy. Drawing from her experience in Zimbabwe, Fay Chung, UNICEF's chief of education, outlines elements of success for expanding educational opportunities. The report also commends the educational achievement levels in China, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe. *The Progress of Nations 1994*, New York, UNICEF, 1994, 54 pp.

UNDP PUTS PERSONAL SECURITY FIRST

The need to put human security ahead of national security is the key theme of the 1994 *Human Development Report*, published for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Pointing out that human security is relevant to people everywhere in the world, the Report offers concrete proposals for next year's World Summit for Social Development. One is to reduce global military spending by 3 per cent a year, with specific percentages of savings earmarked for global human security. Another is a 20:20 global compact for human development. This means allocating at least 20 per cent of national budgets and 20 per cent of donor aid for basic education, primary health care, safe drinking water and family planning services. The Report also ranks 173 countries according to the Human Development Index. *Human Development Report 1994*, Oxford University Press, 240 pp.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 1994

SEPTEMBER

5-13
Cairo, Egypt
International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)
>>>>ICPD Secretariat, New York, NY 10001, USA
Tel: (1-212) 297 5244; Fax: (1-212) 297 5250

5-16
Oslo, Norway
Annual Meeting of the International Multi-Channel Action Group for Education Steering Committee
>>>> ICDE
Contact: Reidar Roll, ICDE, Oslo, Norway
Tel: (47-2) 295 06 30; Fax: (47-2) 295 07 19

5-18
Mauritius
Ministerial Consultation on School Drop-out and Adolescent Pregnancy on the theme "Counting the cost"
>>>> Forum of African Women Educationists and Donors for African Education (DAE)
Tel: (254-2) 330 352; Fax (254-2) 210 709

15-21
Cairo, Egypt
International Conference on Adult Education: World Assembly
>>>>ICAE
Contact: ICAE, Toronto, Canada
Tel: (1-416) 588-1211; Fax: (1-416) 588-5725

26-29
Santiago, Chile
Fifth Session of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century
>>>> UNESCO
Contact: Alexandra Draxler, UNESCO (See address in box)

OCTOBER

2-3
Geneva, Switzerland
Working Group on Female Participation
>>>>Aga Khan Foundation/DAE
Contact: Joyce Lewinger Moock, Rockefeller Foundation, New York.
Tel: (1-212) 869 8500; Fax: (1-212) 764 3468

4
Geneva, Switzerland
African Ministers' Caucus
>>>Donors for African Education (DAE)
Contact: DAE, Paris. Tel: (33-1) 45 03 37 85.

3-5
Paris, France
World Symposium on Family Literacy
>>>>UNESCO/Gateway Educational Products Ltd.
Contact: John Ryan, UNESCO (See address in box)

3-8
Geneva, Switzerland
Forty-fourth session of the International Conference on Education. Appraisal and Perspectives of Education for International Understanding
>>>> UNESCO/International Bureau of Education
Contact: Juan Carlos Tedesco, International Bureau of Education, Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: (41-22) 798-1455; Fax: (41-22) 798-1486

19-22
Amman, Jordan
IIEP-UNICEF Ministers of Education Primary Policy Seminar: Education for All four years after Jomtien
>>>UNICEF/IIEP/UNESCO
Contact: Dr Frank Dall, UNICEF Regional Adviser
Tel: (962) 629 5 71; Fax: (962) 640 049

NOVEMBER

16-18
Nice, France
International Working Group on Education
>>>IIEP/UNESCO
Contact: Gabriel Carron, IIEP, Paris
Tel: (33-1) 45 03 77 00; Fax: (33-1) 40 72 83 66

21-22
Paris, France
Executive Committee Meeting of the Donors for African Education (DAE)
>>>DAE, Paris, France
Tel: (33-1) 45 03 37 85.

EFA 2000

EFA 2000 is a quarterly news bulletin published by **UNESCO** (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) for the **Secretariat of the International Consultative Forum on Education for All**. The bulletin provides news on the follow-up to the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990), at which 155 countries pledged to provide education for all children and adults and massively reduce illiteracy before the year 2000. EFA 2000 is produced in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

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